



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

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November 16, 2004

Dear Interested Party:

After much collaboration with interested parties, the Department of Ecology is pleased to issue the Beyond Waste Plan. This plan, along with related background papers, comprises the state Hazardous Waste Plan and the state Solid Waste Plan. Ecology looks forward to continuing the partnerships that built this combined plan as we begin implementing the plan's recommendations. The plan documents may be accessed on-line at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/beyondwaste/finalplan.html>.

We would like to point out a few specifics about the Beyond Waste summary document. This is an internet document that describes Ecology's 30-year plans for using wastes as resources, decreasing solid and hazardous wastes, increasing recycling, properly managing those wastes that remain, and reducing the use of toxic substances. It contains the background, goals, recommendations and milestones for the solid and hazardous waste plans.

Throughout the summary, electronic links connect to longer papers, entitled "Background Information," related to specific sections in the summary. These long papers contain more detail about the subject, the goals and recommendations.

The strong support expressed for the Beyond Waste vision by many people across the state has been highly encouraging. Representatives of state and local government agencies, nonprofit organizations, waste management companies, and others made development of the Beyond Waste Plan a success, and their commitment is much appreciated.

To ensure adequate input, the development process for this plan included numerous public meetings, much collaborative research, a survey, focus groups, and a long comment period on the draft plan. We believe the final plan reflects the informed and helpful thinking expressed by interested parties around the state. The major comment themes and responses on the draft plan, issued in May of this year, have been summarized in a document available on the project's Web site at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/0407035.html>.

The development of the plan documents, of course, is just the first step. Implementing this plan over the next 30 years will change the way wastes are handled in Washington State. Beyond Waste will bring us closer to many important goals that are essential to maintain a high quality of life in Washington, such as clean air and water, healthy living and working environments, and a strong economy. The plan's ambitious and progressive recommendations are not, however, intended to be carried out by the Department of Ecology alone. The important steps laid out in this plan will benefit Washington in many ways; they are timely steps that build upon and strengthen existing efforts.

Many new partners will be needed as implementation actions get underway. If you or your organization would like to work on implementing the Beyond Waste Plan, please let us know by e-mailing us through the Beyond Waste Web site at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/beyondwaste/>. This Web site will be updated with progress reports, so we encourage you to check the site periodically.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Darin Rice".

Darin Rice, Acting Program Manager
Hazardous Waste and Toxic Reduction

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cullen Stephenson".

Cullen Stephenson, Program Manager
Solid Waste and Financial Assistance